

RESELLING CLOUD SOLUTIONS, THE CHANNEL WAY



Channel Partners hold a great chance to create more value for their customers as well as their vendor partners in terms of selling cloud solutions and gain on the big competitive edge today

At a time when enterprise and SMB customers look forward to doing more with less, the power of cloud computing can offer small and midsize companies wonderful potential benefits – in cost savings, time efficiency and simplifying business processes.

However, solution providers must be able to differentiate the hype from the benefits of cloud computing to provide a solid foundation for any solution implementation and gain big from reselling the cloud driven solutions.

SMB customers are acutely aware of the challenge of minimizing cost, while being able to maximize their offerings. Hence customers won't buy cloud-based IT offerings unless channel partners can clearly demonstrate both immediate and ongoing cost savings.

While a move to the cloud is generally expected to bring significant cost savings, the real challenge is to demonstrate the specific savings to the customer. Providing a detailed quote that clearly demonstrates the savings in hardware, management and operations costs realized by moving IT assets to the cloud is critical.



Jagjit Singh Arora,
Director – Regional Sales,
Red Hat India

As per the views of Jagjit Singh Arora, Director – Regional Sales, Red Hat India, currently the industry is transposing from client-server to cloud-mobile. "The major shift that I believe will continue in the coming year is open

source becoming the preferred choice for cloud. Indeed, it is already the foundation for widespread cloud services and enterprise applications. Also, by incorporating open cloud across the full gamut of features organizations can be confident that their technologies will deliver the full strategic value as promised by cloud computing. I believe that only open source can deliver on this promise," he explains.

"When it comes to cloud computing, we've helped lead the way to open platform, middleware, and virtualization technologies. From Linux to JBoss to OpenStack, Red Hat drives innovation in emerging technology by standardizing software and liberating resources.

Our robust cloud portfolio includes offerings such as Red Hat Cloud Infrastructure, Red Hat CloudForms, Red Hat Enterprise Virtualization, Red Hat Enterprise Linux OpenStack Platform, Red Hat Storage Server, and OpenShift—Red Hat's Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) product suite. In fact, many of the first clouds were built on open Red Hat technology. And it is these open technologies that are defining the future of cloud computing and IT.

Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS): Red Hat Cloud Infrastructure lets our customers both build and

manage an open, private IaaS clouds based on data-center virtualization and management technologies. It also offers an on-ramp to a highly scalable, public cloud-like infrastructure based on OpenStack.

PaaS: Red Hat believes the path to better IT efficiency and innovation lies in the cloud-via public PaaS with OpenShift Online by Red Hat or private PaaS with Red Hat's award-winning OpenShift Enterprise.

OpenShift alleviates barriers to IT productivity by:

- Letting developers focus on what they care about most—application code—to speed application development.
- Automating IT processes to streamline IT service delivery.
- Enabling you to use your infrastructure more efficiently across development, test, and production environments." He explains.



Prashant Gupta
Head of Solutions, Verizon
Enterprise Solutions, India

According to Prashant Gupta, Head of Solutions, Verizon Enterprise Solutions, India, the future definitely looks promising and this is what we expect to be in store for us:

The Cloud Gets Intelligent: Organizations are increasingly focusing on leveraging their data to enhance decision-making, drive revenue, reduce costs and improve customer experiences, and the coming years will see cloud providers move strongly to support their customers in these efforts.

In particular, as data gets even more distributed in terms of both consumers and devices, the notion of transforming data in the cloud, and not tying it back to your corporate data center, becomes more and more attractive. We think a lot about analytics and the need that all businesses have for analytics. We see a lot of internal usage and across the entire industry the notion that businesses can mine very useful information from the vast data sets they have is a big deal. Providers will put forth a range of offerings that range from the building blocks of analytics solutions to full turnkey services.

Providers Add Gravity to the Cloud: Where mobile is the norm and rich media content is a given, the cloud flexes its muscles as the location where growing data volumes can be stored, accessed and analyzed on demand, according to Verizon. The company says adding software and services to the cloud will be a key focus for cloud providers as they duke it out for customers. New integrated cloud offerings will increasingly enable mashups of fixed and mobile networks; systems, ideas and solutions; people and things; and intelligence and information.

We expect to see a sharp focus on how enter-

prises and governments use technology to enhance customer experience and enable innovation. Enterprise success will be measured by how well organizations can use technology to meet user expectations and harness innovation. Key trends will include, M2M as a service, which will overcome issues that have previously prevented organizations from fully embracing M2M. Also, with cyber-attacks becoming more sophisticated, hiring executives with relevant skills will compel organizations to demand a substantial increase in security investments. Lastly, organizations will use cloud for more than just development and testing.

The future of cloud computing is nothing but promising. Secure hybrid clouds have started to gain momentum as enterprise customers require flexibility in moving certain workload applications. He explains.

According to Neeraj Mediratta, CEO, Ace Data Devices Pvt. Ltd., with the worldwide Public IT cloud services spending expected to touch USD 107 billion up from a meager USD 47.4 billion (IDC research), it can be safely said that cloud services will go beyond basic- IaaS, PaaS and SaaS to more advanced models such as a DevOps model.

"Cloud price wars will continue well into 2015 and force smaller competitors to niche markets, such as industry verticals. Computing, particularly cloud storage has been proven in multiple real world use cases to simplify IT operations while saving companies millions of dollars. Indeed, the big data era would not be possible without the advent of highly scalable cloud storage, which enables advanced analytics at an acceptable cost," he adds on.

On the other hand, as per the views of Stuart Fisher, Managing Director, APAC- Sophos, emerging markets leap-frog many technology adoptions, including Cloud. According to Frost and Sullivan, SaaS adoption by SMB in India is growing at a CAGR of >25% and is expected to reach USD 370 Million by 2018.

"SMB is the growth engine of emerging markets and Sophos is uniquely positioned for and in this market segment, unlike the majority of security technology companies that focus on the Global 2000 – the largest organizations in the world with the largest budgets. We believe there is a massive opportunity to combine new technologies like Cloud and big data to connect the "silos" of IT security (such as network, endpoint, and mobile) and deliver vastly better security for small and mid-market enterprises. A focus on combining great technology with a simple and approachable user experience has been largely missing from the IT security landscape. We think it's a very big idea, which is why we are pursuing it relentlessly. Many solutions overlap and are hard to understand and use. In this situation, many SMEs are poorly protected – they just don't have the staff to figure it all out. And when they're poorly protected, bad things happen – customer data gets stolen, internal systems are corrupted, or critical business information ends up in the wrong hands. Not only is protecting this segment a multi-billion dollar opportunity, but we believe we are making a real difference in the business lives of our customers by keeping them safe from the dizzying array of online and IT threats. That's why so many small and mid-market enter-

prises choose Sophos – and why so many channel partners choose to work with us. And it's not just small or mid-market businesses. Our focus on simplicity, ease of use, and solutions that "just work" also has been the key to many large enterprises (or "pragmatic" enterprises as we call them) also choosing Sophos. It turns out that many of them don't like complexity any more than smaller organizations (or that they simply don't want an army of IT staff dedicated to security)," he explained.

Cloud solution for business challenges

As opined by many industry experts, channel partners need to identify the customer's problem first, and then sell the solution. One thing that cloud does is level the playing field. It allows them to access the technology, services that they normally could not on their own. That means that both large and small customers might benefit from going to the cloud.

Customers may have a preconceived notion of what size solution should be cloud hosted. Some may not understand that these types of solutions aren't always implemented on a grand scale —



Neeraj Mediratta
CEO,
Ace Data Devices Pvt. Ltd.,

the cloud isn't only for gigantic concerns.

Neeraj Mediratta, CEO, Ace Data Devices says that Ace Data offers a suite of solutions and professional services that address Cloud based and local backup, as well as disaster recovery.

ter recovery.

"Our solutions may be categorised into the following: Abhaya – Cloud backup, Virtual Desktop and Storage as a Service - Parisabhya- Backup, Storage and Compliance Assessment and Suprayukta – Managed backup, Infrastructure management and Implementation Services. Ace Data Abhaya, cloud data storage, backup, retrieval and protection service, helps you by guaranteeing high availability of business critical applications and data storage, protection and retrieval with surety of specialists," he adds.

Stuart Fisher, Managing Director, APAC- Sophos says that Sophos provides cloud-based, cloud managed security solutions that protect desktops, laptops and servers, manage mobile devices, and provide comprehensive web security.

"What makes Sophos Cloud unique is that all these solutions are integrated and managed using a unified management console that is extremely simple to use and is user-centric. For example, if an end user called in to report an issue, the IT admin can bring up that user's profile and know exactly what devices he/she has, the protection status, and what policies are applied to this user. By integrating endpoint protection with MDM, we make it easy for IT to enable BYOD. And with user-based pricing we don't penalize companies that want to embrace BYOD and users with multiple devices," he explains.

Speaking on the big benefits that these cloud solutions bring to the table, Jagjit Singh Arora, Director – Regional Sales, Red Hat India, says that With Red Hat Cloud Infrastructure, customers pay far less than they would for alternative solutions,

yet get far more. It works with your existing infrastructure, giving you choice and full control of your strategic direction.

"It addresses all their virtualization and private cloud needs. Some of the benefits that the customers experience include – flexibility, choice and interoperability, heterogeneous coverage, high performance coupled with confidence since Red Hat is the leader in Open Stack and Linux communities.

Red Hat Cloud Infrastructure lets you both build and manage an open, private IaaS cloud based on datacenter virtualization and management technologies. It also offers an on-ramp to a highly scalable, public cloud-like infrastructure based on Open-Stack.

Red Hat Cloud Infrastructure tightly integrates three components, providing a cloud stack unmatched in the market. Deploy any combination of these fully integrated components in whatever way you need," He adds on.

Prashant Gupta, Head of Solutions, Verizon Enterprise Solutions, India, says that Verizon Cloud solutions allow enterprises to access both public and private cloud capabilities, end-to-end security features, scalable and durable object storage, and multiple levels of managed services. This helps them gain simplified control over their computing workloads.

Verizon offers:

- Public, virtual private, and private cloud deployment models
- Interconnectivity on a powerful global network
- Resilient and durable object storage

Cloud Benefits for Channel Partners

According to Neeraj Mediratta, CEO, Ace Data Devices, by partnering with Ace-Data, partners can deliver comprehensive storage, sharing and backup solutions and manage them from single platform.

"They can manage anywhere from tens to tens of thousands of customers and control all aspects of storage and backup provisioning and more. Abhaya enables you to address the backup needs of your customers, be they SMBs or large enterprises, and



Stuart Fisher
Managing Director,
APAC- Sophos

address a variety of use-cases rapidly and easily," he adds on.

As per the views of Stuart Fisher, Managing Director, APAC- Sophos, "Sophos Cloud presents an opportunity to establish and/or grow your cloud

business.

i. It is easy to get started, Sophos Cloud is hosted by Sophos so there's no partner investment required to set up a management server or other infrastructure

ii. It is extremely easy to sell and upsell. Trial provisioning takes less than a minute. Partners can also provision trials directly from the partner dashboard. Sophos also shares leads with partners and provides a trial affiliate link to protect each partner's demand generation efforts.

Sophos Cloud started with cloud-managed endpoint protection, and rapidly added functions such

as MDM, web security and server protection – all managed through the same console. This makes it extremely easy for customers to try new functions and for partners to sell additional functionality as it becomes available.

b. Have full control of the business

i. To ensure our channel partners have full visibility, control and can easily provide services, Sophos provides a Cloud-managed, multi-tenant partner dashboard. From the partner dashboard, partners can clearly see all accounts, their subscriptions status, and alerts. The dashboard also allows partners to view and manage customers' consoles to provide full service assistance remotely, facilitating seamless customer services and reducing on-site visits," he adds on.

Prashant Gupta, Head of Solutions, Verizon Enterprise Solutions, India explains that Verizon is constantly looking to simplify the way the company does business with its channel partners, to expand opportunities for existing and new partners in areas such as cloud, mobility, networking and communications in mid-market businesses.

"We have also launched a channel partner program to help serve the needs of our clients. Whether teaming with Verizon directly or indirectly or as a hybrid, we are enabling clients to simplify how they consume communications and IT services in a way that best meets their needs, while giving them access to the full Verizon portfolio. Our channel partners are developing new solution/ service offering to create revenue streams leveraging our cloud platforms. The Verizon Partner Program also includes simple-to-use tools via its Partner Portal, and clear and consistent engagement processes, as well as a training program and certification for its members. In addition, a 12-member Partner Advisory Board represents the voice of Verizon's channel program members, helping to provide a successful go-to-market approach," he adds on.

According to Verizon Enterprise Solutions' State of the Market: Enterprise Cloud 2014 report, 65 percent of enterprises are now using cloud technology, services and solutions as part of their IT infrastructure. In addition, IT – specifically the CIO/CTO – controls more than 80 percent of total cloud spend within the organization. The CIO/CTO personally oversees more than half (62 percent) of cloud purchases. Seventy two percent say they expect to put more than half of their workloads in the cloud by 2017, up from 58% today.

The Big Opportunities in Cloud

Despite the ethereal nature of cloud computing, in the end, it's all powered by nuts and bolts — and software. Customers will want to know how the data center is locked down. Who is allowed access?

What are the personnel roles?

Service level agreements can make or break your deal. Some cloud providers don't offer SLAs, noting that their technology is so reliable they are "unnecessary." If that's so, then committing to that reliability in writing should not be a problem.

Technology savvy channel partners are beginning to understand that they can include such areas as compliance, liability and reliability into SLAs. Get ahead of the curve by offering only those products and solutions with which you have confidence, and then draft SLAs around them.

As Jagjit Singh Arora, Director – Regional Sales, Red Hat India puts it. According to research firm Gartner, the Indian enterprise software market is expected to touch about \$6.7 billion by 2017. India is one of our key markets in the APAC region as open source is coming up as the driving force behind emerging technologies ranging from cloud to social applications. Big data, analytics, and hyper

scale computing will also play a major role in catalyzing the adoption of open clouds among enterprises.

"Red Hat's cloud offerings provide a steady environment that will enable organizations to run workloads in their enterprise datacenter. With an open, hybrid cloud infrastructure from Red Hat, IT operations can be transformed into adaptive, agile, efficient and highly automated infrastructure preparing for the future. Red Hat's cloud offerings do not lock customers into the cloud stack; instead they are used alone or in mixed environments." He explains.

Prashant Gupta, Head of Solutions, Verizon Enterprise Solutions, India, says that enterprise cloud has thus evolved, graduating from an experimental platform to one that carries mission-critical workloads. It is simultaneously redefining and strengthening the role of centralized IT and driving a corresponding change in what enterprises expect from their cloud services provider.

"The Verizon channel partner program is focused on adding value. It tailors opportunities for systems integrators, value-added resellers, agents and solution providers to meet client needs, especially those looking to tap into Verizon's expertise in cloud, mobility and connected devices, also known as the Internet of Things. With the Verizon Partner

Program, Verizon is addressing a broad range of industries, including solutions for the healthcare, financial services, energy and utility, retail hospitality, automotive, manufacturing, transportation, distribution and the public sector," he adds on.

As per the views of Neeraj Mediratta, CEO, Ace Data Devices, according to a report in 2014 by IDC, the digital universe is doubling in size every two years and will multiply 10-fold between 2013 and 2020 – from 4.4 trillion gigabytes to 44 trillion gigabytes.

"This surge in data is exploding for multiple reasons, including the proliferation of wireless technologies, smart products, software defined businesses and the Internet of Things (IoT). Parallel to this, the total Cloud Storage market is expected to reach \$46.8 billion by 2018 with a CAGR of 40.2% as per research of Markets and Markets. This transition to cloud backup will ride on perceived lower TCO, faster and easier deployment and reduced capital expense," he explains.

"In addition to offering market-leading Abhaya cloud data backup protection and all the benefits of our brand reputation for reliability and security, Ace Data also helps channel partners with business advice including marketing strategy and technical support. In 2015, Ace Data will be focusing on enabling our partners with this specialized backup

technology so that they have an end to end management of customers' data which will create new avenues for revenue while simultaneously move our channel partners higher up in the value chain," he adds on.

Stuart Fisher, Managing Director, APAC- Sophos says that worldwide security spend is migrating to Cloud at a much faster rate. It is estimated that by 2015, 22% of Worldwide SMB investment in Security Software and Services will be invested in Cloud Security. Emerging countries have seen a double digit jump in the number of Cloud Providers and channel partners (resellers).

"With Sophos cloud and the partner dashboard, we make it easy for partners to provide multiple services around Sophos Cloud. Partners can offer security management services and help their customers embrace BYOD while eliminating the need for on-site visits, thus reducing their service costs. According to AMI research, Cloud consulting and related value added services - such as training and implementation - contribute the highest proportion to partner revenue in mature countries. In emerging countries, remote managed services are the largest revenue generator within the cloud technology space," he explains.